



## BEHIND THE BUSINESS

*"Mississippi's economy is made up of the most creative, unique, and innovative businesses in the entire world. The Secretary of State's Office is proud to spotlight these businesses, and provide support for all ventures which choose to invest in our great State."*

*Dellunt*



### Mississippi Blues Marathon

Just after sunrise on Saturday, January 9, 2016, Jackson's streets will be filled with a stampede of runners and the syncopated beat of blues musicians as the 9th annual Mississippi Blues Marathon gets underway.

With almost 4000 marathon participants from all across the U.S. and numerous foreign countries signed up to race through downtown Jackson, the single-loop marathon race has already reached maximum enrollment for the quarter marathon and relay teams.



The start/finish elevation is at 292 feet with the maximum elevation at almost 400 feet. The net gain in elevation is 950 feet. Race director John Noblin describes the course as a trek over "rolling typography" with no climbs longer than 400 meters. A highlight of the race is the soundtrack provided on race day with musicians performing all along the race course, a feature which sets the Blues Marathon apart from other competitions. For spectators, some of the most popular locations include the Fondren district, Belhaven and downtown near the Mississippi Museum of Art.

The marathon, half marathon, and quarter marathon start at 7:00 a.m. and the kids' run begins at 8 a.m. Wheelers are allowed in the racecourse events as well. The Start/Finish area is located at the Art Garden at the Mississippi Museum of Art at 380 South Lamar. The exact location of the starting line is the intersection of Pascagoula Street and Lamar Street. Presenting sponsor is BlueCross BlueShield of Mississippi.

Overall, masters and grand-masters awards are three deep in five-year age categories for male and female, beginning with the 16-19 age group and ending with 75-plus. No prize money is awarded. There is a seven-hour time limit for both the marathon and half-marathon. After seven hours, runners of the course will be allowed to finish unsupported. Aid stations, marshals and traffic control will be removed from the course at 2 p.m.

Noblin encourages Jackson residents to get involved as volunteers. All volunteers who register and attend training receive a 201 "Road Crew" t-shirt. To register, go to [www.msbluesmarathon.com](http://www.msbluesmarathon.com).

This year, race day will also feature the Blues Expo on January 7th- 8th at the Jackson Convention Complex. Vendors from around the country will have running gear and accessories for sale. Several local vendors will be selling Blues music-related items as well. Expo visitors will also enjoy live Blues music from nationally and internationally renowned Blues artists. On Thursday, January 7, the Expo will be open from 3p.m. to 7 p.m. On Friday, January 8, hours are 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.